

Cady Guyton
Annotation #6
The Corporation
487 words

1. Title, director and release year?

The Corporation was directed by Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott and released in 2003.

2. What is the central argument or narrative of the film?

The narrative of the film is to illustrate the origin and development of The Corporation within American capitalist society and the problems that have arisen.

3. How is the argument or narrative made and sustained? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

The argument is broken up into the many "phases" of corporate evolution often centering on various legal decisions for and against the corporation ranging from the corporation as an individual to the patentability of living things.

4. What sustainability issues did you spot? Identify and explain each. (Examples - Political, Legal, Economic, Technological, Media, Organizational, Educational, Behavioral, Cultural, Ecological)

The Corporation does a very good job illustrating the various levels of unsustainability within corporate existence today laying out the slippery slope that we have started down showing the privatization of drinking water, to patenting the human genome one gene at a time, to marketing to children, to simultaneous support of the U.S. and Nazi Germany through rebranding during WWII.

5. What parts of the film did you find most persuasive and/or compelling?

The most persuasive aspect of the film is bringing to light that which is not commonly known. I would argue that the average American (middle class or below) understands the dangers of The Corporation as an entity; this film shows specific scenarios of gene patenting, legal cover-ups and appeals (for example by Monsanto), to maintenance of German markets during WWII in the interest of preserving profits.

6. Does the film have emotional appeal to you? Why? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

I do think that the film has an emotional appeal in order to rally the public against the corporate world, and does so by showing scenes of animals under microscopes, people fighting for a need as basic as water, and by touching on sensitive subjects such as the Holocaust and Nazi Germany.

7. Does the film rely more on science or emotion? (How does the film balance the scientific argument and the emotional argument?)

The film relies more on emotion because there is not specific science behind America's Corporations and their calculated rise to power, and while statistics can be lost, manipulated, and overlooked, scenes of the 'evils' that have manifested within the corporate structure offers more reactionary accusations.

8. Does the film want you to do something? If the film does suggest action, do you think it is a good idea? Will the suggested action help?

The film suggests that we realize the injustices within a corporation and that there are cracks in the structure; the film suggests "calling the bluff" in the hope and/or expectation that the tables will turn and corporations will be held accountable. The Kathy Lee Gifford and WalMart example is given, and Gap allowing independent monitoring of their factories in El Salvador is given as a success story. Michael Moore employs the importance of documentaries (and subsequent dissemination of information) on screen, and asserts that the average American within the system must take responsibility for how their individual actions perpetuate the system.

9. Are there other actions that are not suggested that should be taken?

Ultimately, legislative action must be taken as I do not expect corporations to change their policies and restructure themselves on their own. Given the general audience of the film, I suppose this puts power in the hands of the voter where one can hope that the desires of the voter can outweigh the money of the corporation in the legislative realm.

10. What was the target audience for this film? Why?

Most likely, the target audience for this film is the American consumer because ultimately corporations are driven by profits which originate from the consumer and how they spend their money.